

# BEDWELL GLOBAL MINISTRIES

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**Scriptural Background**  
**Deuteronomy 11:16-22,**  
**31:9-22.**

## THE FOUNDATION OF FAITH.

**Scripture Reading – Deuteronomy 11:16-22,**  
**31:9-13.**

### Introduction

General Omar Bradley said that “America today is running on the momentum of Godly ancestry, and when that momentum runs down God help America.” With the Bible and prayer barred from our schools, and the Ten Commandments from our governmental institutions, it has become clear that this downward momentum has gained speed. The pop-culture does not realize that this happening, but what is more tragic it is unaware of the catastrophic consequences of such neglect. The pollster George Gallup Jr. Has referred to America as a “nation of Biblical illiterates.” But what is even more of

a concern is that so many Christians are ignorant of the Bible, and because the teaching of the scriptures is the foundation of the faith, ignorance of its teachings leads to all kinds of error and even apostasy. The Former Secretary of State William Bennett concludes that “We have become the kind of society that civilized countries used to send missionaries to.” This amazing story actually happened to Joseph Parker, minister of the City Temple in London. An old lady waited on Dr Parker in his vestry after the service to thank him for the help she received from his sermons. “You throw such wonderful light on the Bible, Doctor,” she said. “Do you know that until this morning, I had always thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were man and wife?” A pastor had been invited to teach a Bible lesson to a special group of the senior class who had superior grades. After he had completed his lesson he asked the students several questions on the Bible. He asked what the epistles were. The reply by one of the young people was that the epistles were the wives of the Apostles. The pastor was some what stunned and related the incident to his congregation on Sunday morning. After the service a lady came to him and asked “If the epistles were not the wives of the apostles whose wives were they?” And while many Evangelical Christian cry out indignantly against the banning of the word of God in the schools, their ignorance of the scriptures and a lack of a commitment to prayer in the church and in their personal lives is disturbing.

A new poll by the Barna research group suggests that religious illiteracy has increased. Only three teenagers in 10 know why Easter is celebrated. Three out of four Americans (nearly half of “born again” Christians) believe the Bible teaches that “God helps those who help themselves.” A similar number of born-again Christians deny the existence of the Holy Spirit and Satan. One in five denies Jesus’ physical resurrection or believes that He was a sinner. Why is there so much ignorance about the Bible? Most likely, it comes from a lack of Bible readership. Research tells us that half of all Americans do not read the Bible. The majority of born-again Christians read the Bible once or twice a week, or not at all. The survey found that only 18% of all Christians said they read the Word every day, while another 18% read the Bible between three and six days a week. 37% read it once or twice a week, and 23% said they do not read the Bible at all. These statistics refer only to so-called born again Christians.

The principles of the Word of God upon which this nation was founded have been regulated to the backdoor of history. To discard the book that was the guiding light to our fore-fathers, is tantamount to be the ultimate death sentence to freedom.

George Washington correctly said it is “impossible to rightly govern the country without God and the Bible.” I firmly believe in this book. In my first year of college in the British Isles, I made a commitment to preaching and expounding this Word. It has

not always been easy for in this superficial age in the church, there are those who have risen strongly up against it. Some leave the church to find a more entertaining or “feel good” sermons. I told one church board in an interview for a church position that if they called me, that that there would be those who would possibly leave the church because of the preaching and the Biblical exposition of God’s word. It is part of the reality of the modern church. They called me anyway. In one church one man urged me to just tell more stories. He seemed to be more interested in symbolism than substance. He left the church and moved from one church after another. As far as I know that man is unsettled and unstable. Others in my experience have through the years have reacted strongly against it. Fortunately this attitude is confined to a relatively small group of people. As a preacher I have nothing of value to say apart from the Word of God. In the 31<sup>st</sup> chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses is saying farewell to the nation of Israel. Forty years before this, he had written God’s Law in a book. (Exodus 17:14; 24:4, 7.) “He had written a dairy of his journeys. (Numbers 33:2) Now his book is completed, he handed it over to the Priests and Levites, with the instruction that it be read it periodically to the people. This was a high point in the history of God’s people. The Word of God was given to the people for their enlightenment, to preserve their liberty, to teach the law, reveal will of God, and be an effective defense against the corruption of their faith and falling into

heathen bondage. It was a guide to holy living. A study of the history of God's people will reveal, that it was when they obeyed God's word that they prospered, but when they neglected it and disobeyed it, that they fell into idolatry, which resulted in defeat as a nation. Other times they were taken into captivity and enslaved by their enemies. Not only was the word of God the charter of the freedom of God's people, it was foundation on which the character of nation would be formed. Moses was urgent about this important challenge.

Now the question arises as to why he was urgent about giving the Word of God to the Nation. The two passages which are the basis of this devotional tell us why.

**1. THE WORD OF GOD IS CRUCIAL TO A GODLY NATION THEREFORE IS IMPERATIVE TO ALL. Deuteronomy 31:9-11.**

"And so Moses wrote down this law and gave it the priests, the Sons of Levi, who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord and to all the elders of Israel." What is important here is that Moses was deeply concerned about the scriptures being

**a. Preserved.**

**Deuteronomy 31:9-11.**

"So Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the Priests." It was not sufficient for Moses to the present the Law verbally. It had been revealed to Moses to write it down in order that it might be preserved. This method was more secure and complete than

handing it down orally or verbally. And in verses 24-26 we are told that when Moses had finished the writing in a book, the words of the Law from the beginning to end. V.25, he gave this command to the Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord...." Then it will remain as a witness against you. The scriptures, which are God's prescription for righteous and holy living and a written revelation of His will, needed to be preserved for the welfare of the nation. Without adherence to the law they would degenerate into a pagan nation, and lose their distinctiveness as a holy people, through whom God would accomplish His purposes to redeem the world. This was a crucial moment in the history of God's people. This document must be preserved. But that is not enough because Moses said that these words must be,

**b. Proclaimed. Deuteronomy 31:11**

Moses said, "When all Israel comes to appear before the Lord you God at the place you will chose, you shall read this Law before them in their hearing." Though the preservation of the Word of God was crucial to the life of the nation, it was insufficient. The scriptures had to be declared, proclaimed and taught. The dynamic principles embossed in its pages would only come alive as they are proclaimed, taught and applied to the people's lives. To nurture, develop and maintain Godliness or holiness of life, the scriptures must be

become and integral part of our lives. The Apostle Paul recognized the crucial nature of the scriptures when he wrote in his second letter to Timothy the 3 chapter and the 16<sup>th</sup> verse, “All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.V.17,“so that the man of God maybe thoroughly equipped for every good work.” The scriptures must be proclaimed if they are to have a transforming effect on the lives of people. The Word of God is crucial and therefore is imperative to all. Furthermore,

**2. THE WORD OF GOD IS UNIVERSAL AND THEREFORE IS INCLUSIVE OF ALL.**  
**Deuteronomy 31:11.**

“Again Moses instructs his people, “You shall read this Law before them in their hearing. V.12. Assemble the people, men and women and children and the aliens living in your towns.” You read in these verses, that they were to include even the aliens or strangers living in their midst. The Word of God transcends culture and race. It is a universal book. It has a universal message which meets a universal need. It is not restricted to a select group of people. It is relevant to all cultures. What is interesting here is that the people were to congregate as a group in

**a. A Specific Place and at a specific time.**  
**Deuteronomy 31:11-12.**

**The Law was to be read before the Lord God to the children of Israel at a place that He chose.** It is clear from the words of Moses, that he believed that there is something uniquely helpful, about meeting together at a specific place, at a specific time to hear God’s word. In verse 12 Moses commanded them to “assemble the people – men women and children and aliens living in your towns – so that they can listen and learn to fear (reverence) the Lord your God and follow carefully all the word of the law.” There is a unity of purpose and consistency of teaching that is important to the effective instruction and development of the nation. This has something significant to say to us in our culture. While it is vital to have private Bible reading and Bible study in order to allow the Spirit of God to reveal himself, and His Holy Will to us through His Word, it is also important to sit with others and listen to those who God has appointed and anointed to expound the rich truths of God’s Word. That is why Bible study, Sunday school and the worship service are so important in the life of the Child of God. The Children of Israel were summoned to a specific place, to hear the reading and instruction of God’s word. Furthermore it is important that we realize that the truth of the word of God is to be more than written in a book or engraved on tablets of stone. It is to be,

**b. Specifically Personal.**

**Deuteronomy 11:18-21.** While there was to be a public proclamation of God’s word, it

**was to be applied personally.** It was read so that men, women and the children could listen and learn to fear the Lord God and follow carefully the words of the Law.

Deuteronomy 31:12. There is an extremely vivid instruction given by Moses to the Children of Israel in Deuteronomy 11:18-20. Note the action that each family has to take with regard to the application of God's Words to the whole family. Note how personally they apply the whole of their lives.

**i. Fix God's words in your hearts and mind.**

**Deuteronomy 11:19.**

**ii. Tie them as symbols on your hands.**

**Deuteronomy 11:18.**

**iii. Bind them on your foreheads.**

**Deuteronomy 11:18. The focus here is on the individual and his family. The he goes on verse 19,**

**iv. Teach them to your children.**

**Deuteronomy 11:19.**

**v. Talk about them when you sit at your home. Deuteronomy 11:19**

**vi. Talk about them you walk along the road.**

**Deuteronomy 11:19**

**vii. Talk about them when you lie down.**

**Deuteronomy 11:19.**

**viii. Talk about them when you get up.**

**Deuteronomy 11:19. These instructions focus on the children. And then he concludes in verse 20,**

**ix. Write them on the door frames,**

**Deuteronomy 11:20. This is important so that there maybe no misunderstanding at all. This law is not to be simply a code or list of principles written on paper or on tablets of**

**stone, they were to be applied to each member of the family. They were to be a way of life. They were to become part of their spiritual bloodstream. The scriptures are alive with Divine life.** Tozer wrote that, "If you would follow on to know the Lord, come at once to the open Bible expecting it to speak to you. Do not come with the notion, that it is a thing which you may push around at your convenience. It is more, than a thing, it is a voice, a word, the very Word of the living God.....whatever keeps me from the Bible is my enemy, however harmless it may appear to me." There are within the scriptures dynamic and redemptive truths It is these truths that will set us free. The truth, the principles, the precepts, the instruction and the laws are to be an inseparable part of our lives. John Alexander wrote that "the central issue about the Bible is whether we live it."

Jeremiah the prophet describes the Word of God as a "Fire in my bones." This Word of God must be tied to our lifestyle in such a way, that it becomes a part of us. This is the deep concern of God for us, and because it is, it should get our attention. His concerns should always be our concerns. Robert Cunningham exhorts us "to read it is to be wise. To believe it is to be safe. And to practice is to be holy." That is why the Psalmist cried out, "I have hidden your word in my heart that I may not sin against you." That is why the Apostle Paul exhorted us "to let the word of God dwell in you richly." Finally the Word of

God is not only universal and therefore inclusive of all,

### **3. THE WORD OF GOD IS PRACTICAL AND THEREFORE INSTRUCTIVE TO ALL.**

**Deuteronomy 31:12-13.**

“Moses said again, “Assemble the people, men, women and children and aliens living in your towns, so that can listen and learn to fear (reverence) the Lord your God and follow carefully all the words of this Law. Their children who do not know the Law, must hear it and learn to fear (reverence) the Lord your God as long as you live in this land you are crossing the Jordan to possess.” They were about to enter the land of Canaan promised to them by God. They were to leave their wilderness wanderings to settle down in a new land. They were to change the desert for green fields, the parched wilderness for ploughed fields, the meager waterholes for running streams and their tattered tents for permanent homes. But they needed more than all of this for their new life. They needed a charter of freedom and a code upon which a holy and righteous nation could be molded and formed. God gave it to them in the Law. The word of the Law and the promise of freedom of the land was a guarantee of the nation’s freedom. Obedience to the Word of the Lord revealed in the Law would guarantee that freedom. In verse 9 we read that Moses “wrote down this Law, and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the Ark of the Covenant and to all the elders of

Israel.” “This Law did not simply describe God’s revelation in the past; it prescribed their lifestyle for the future. Deposited in the Ark, the Word of God was carried by the Levites into unexplored territory before them. Conveyed in this way by the priests, at the head of the marching people, it symbolized sanctity, authority, priority, and the relevance of God’s Word, for His people. It was made clear that any deviation from the law God had set down, would result in corruption, bondage and eventually chaos. These laws were not mild options or tentative suggestions. They were a revelation of the holy character of God. They were non-negotiable principles by which the nation would be guided. They were the Divine standard of truth and holiness. The scriptures state that the Word of God is a “lamp unto our feet and a light to our path.” Solomon wrote in his Proverbs, “For their commands are a lamp, their teaching is light and the correction of discipline, are a way of life.” The Word of God must be handled correctly, if truth is to be proclaimed authoritatively and redemptively.

There are three dangers that I want to bring to your attention, if we are as Paul would say “to rightly divide the way of truth.” They are extremely relevant especially in the light of how some in the church approach the Scriptures, especially as it relates to Christian living and truth. Firstly realize that,

#### **i. The Mind is not the Determining Factor in Ascertaining Christian Truth**

It is true that mind comes into play in receiving and expounding truth. It is also true that the study of God's Word and exposition of it demands the activity of the intellect, but it is well to remember that the mind does not determine truth, nor is it the standard or basis of truth. Paul tells us that the mind of man has been darkened by sin. It has been scarred by evil. We do not mold the scriptures to fit some preconceived notion that satisfies our thinking. We must not work from the mind to the scriptures. We must work from the scriptures to the mind. It is vital that we allow the scriptures to say what was intended in the light of the context in which they were written. And we are to do this with out any preconceived theories or doctrines. The human mind does not determine truth. It is the scriptures themselves that make that determination. Secondly let us not forget,

### **ii. The Emotions are not the Determining Factor in Ascertaining Christian Truth.**

While emotions are an integral part of Christian experience, they are not the foundation of it, nor are they standard by which truth is guided. There are too many who are guided by their feelings and emotions, and because they feel good about a decision, and the result is instability and even confusion. When a decision is faced the crucial question is "what does God's Word say about it?" Thirdly,

### **iii. The Desires are not the determining Factor in Ascertaining Christian Truth.**

Our inward desires are a powerful driving force within us and they play a significant role in fulfilling the expectations of the Lord Jesus Christ, but they do not determine truth for daily living. There are those who want their way in even in the church who will use the scriptures out of context to fulfill their own agenda's. And they will rationalize their desire by a twist of a verse or a passage of scripture. Some of the conclusions are quite ingenious. But desires are not the guidelines or bases of truth. It was Augustine who correctly wrote, "If you believe what you like in the Gospel and reject what you do not like, it is not the Gospel you believe but yourself." There are those who reject Biblical truth, not so much because they think it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts their self-centered lifestyle. The mind, the emotions and the desires are not the source or foundation of truth. The personal practical application of the Word of God to our lives is dependent on three basic responses from us. They our outlined in Deuteronomy 31:12. The first is,

#### **a. Listening. Deuteronomy. 31:12.**

**Listening is linked with the attitude of receptivity of the mind and heart "Assemble the people so they can listen....." Listening means receiving what God's Word says, and NOT what we want it to say. It approaches the scriptures with an attitude**

that openly accepts what the Word of God says. It is not selective listening. To honestly discover the truth of God, and obey the full counsel of God, we do not go to the scriptures with pre-conceived notions. This is not the way it is done. The Bible is the source of truth and we work from that base to formulate Christian truth and to discover what God's will is for us. We listen to what it says and not what we wish it would say. We listen with open minds and hearts, and not with prejudiced opinions, self-entered agenda's, self-guided thinking or selective choices. We do not mold the Word of God according to our mindset and lifestyles, but we allow the Word of God under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, to mold our hearts, minds and lifestyles according to its truth. Moses made quite clear in his significant words, "Assemble the people so that they can listen." So the first step to receiving truth and guidance is listening. The second response is,

### **b. Learning.**

**Deuteronomy 31:12.**

**"Assemble the people so that they can listen and learn.** Learning is dependent on listening. These two ingredients are indispensable to each other. We are to accept and appropriate and apply the truth as we hear it. Learning and listening are indispensable ingredients in the receiving the knowledge of truth. The final response is,

### **c. Following**

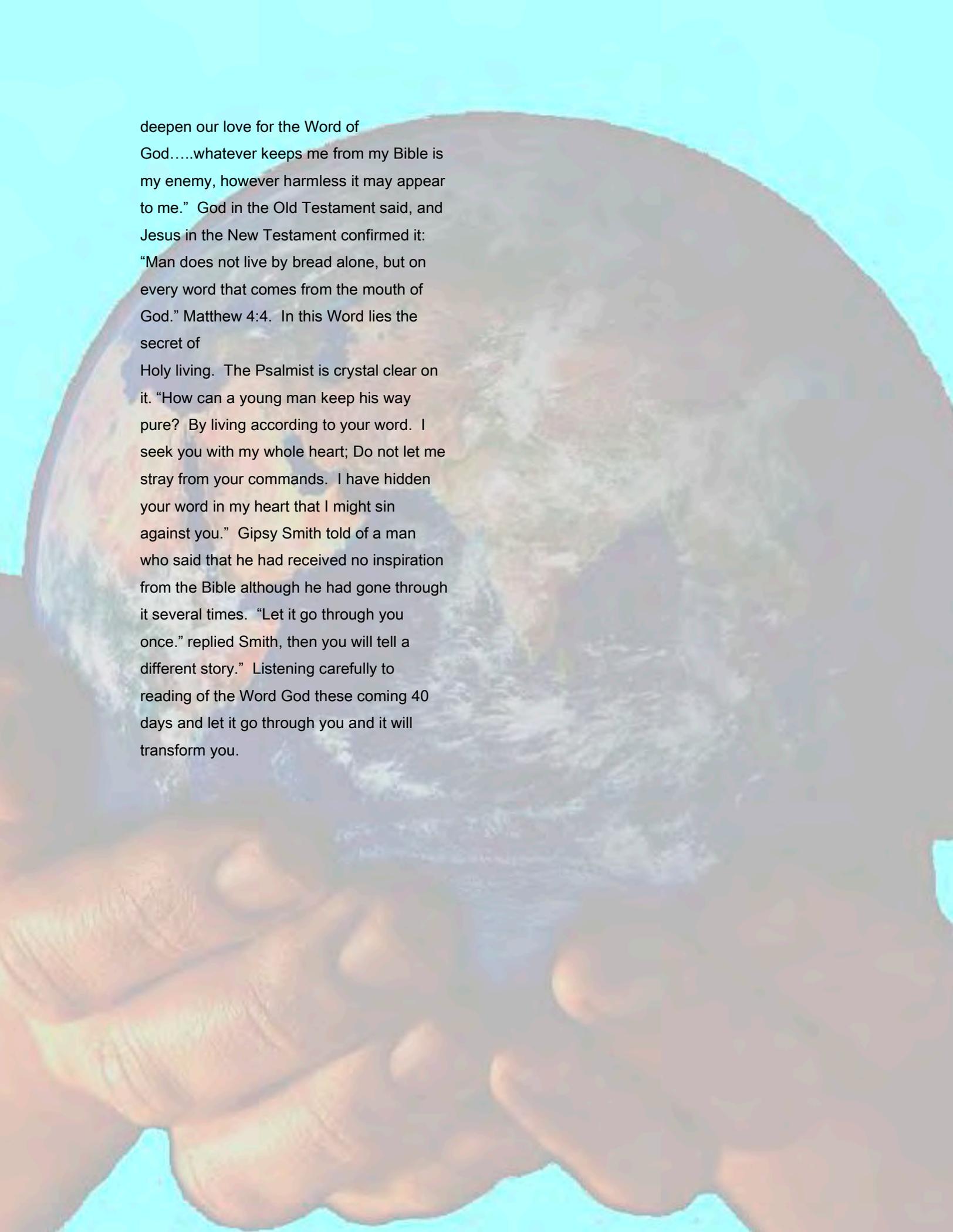
**Deuteronomy 31:12.**

**Assemble the people so that they can listen and learn to fear (reverence) the Lord your God and follow carefully all the words of this law." Note the words "follow carefully." This completes the instruction given by Moses.**

Having listened and learned we are to be obedient to the words of the law. Obedience to the words of God is only way by which we can become strong in soul, mature in character, secure in hope and free in spirit. J.W. Alexander wrote that the "Study of God's Word for the purpose of discovering God's will is the secret discipline which has formed the greatest character." Listening and learning brings knowledge, and knowledge gives the choice whether to obey or not to obey, to accept or not to accept, and to follow or to follow. It enables us to make discerning choices and so it is vital for our soul's salvation that we do so. Peter warns us in his Second letter to Timothy 2:21 "It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known and then turned their backs on the sacred commandment that was passed on to them." Listen, learn and follow or obey. The Word of God is practical and therefore instructive to all.

### **Conclusion**

Tozer wrote that "a true lover of God will also be a lover of His Word. Anything that comes to us from the God of the Word will

A close-up photograph of a person's hands clasped in prayer, with a globe of the Earth visible in the background. The hands are positioned in the foreground, with fingers interlaced. The globe is centered behind the hands, showing the Americas. The lighting is soft, and the overall tone is spiritual and contemplative.

deepen our love for the Word of God.....whatever keeps me from my Bible is my enemy, however harmless it may appear to me.” God in the Old Testament said, and Jesus in the New Testament confirmed it: “Man does not live by bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4. In this Word lies the secret of Holy living. The Psalmist is crystal clear on it. “How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with my whole heart; Do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might sin against you.” Gipsy Smith told of a man who said that he had received no inspiration from the Bible although he had gone through it several times. “Let it go through you once.” replied Smith, then you will tell a different story.” Listening carefully to reading of the Word God these coming 40 days and let it go through you and it will transform you.